

Yarra Valley Wine and Food Society

Function 254 at Frenchy's Bistro, December 12, 2014

It was that time of year again for our Society to head to Frenchy's Bistro for our Christmas Function.

18 members and guests gathered around the table, chatting and greeting old friends while sipping a glass or two of the very nice 1996 Lanson Brut Gold Label Champagne.

1996 was a very good year in Champagne, proven here tonight with the Lanson, a rich complex wine with a magnificent length, a wonderful starter to the evening.

Freshly Shucked Coffin Bay Oysters, Scampi Salad in Black Sesame Cones was the first course of the night. The Oysters, large plump delicious morsels fresh from the sea; accompanied by crisp delicious cones, filled to capacity with a most delicate mixture of shredded Scampi in a Wasabi and Mayonnaise cream, a perfect amount of Wasabi for most.

The presentation on the plate was very pleasing to the eye.

The 2004 version of the above Lanson was, as you would expect, a much lighter wine, very soft on the palate with a shorter finish. It went well with the Oysters.

The next item on the menu was what we came for, Caviar...

The presentation of the Caviar Giaveri Osietra Malossal Classic Russian Sturgeon Roe, a bit of a mouthful to say but, Wow! A palette consisting of small pancakes, fine fingers of bread, sour cream, grated egg white and yolk and finely diced shallot, with the Caviar being the centre of attention, spooned ever so gently into a glass over ice, leaving you to "create" your own masterpiece. Onion or no onion, most decided no. But it is the Russian thing to do.

The Grey Goose Vodka (wheat) from France went down very smoothly, for some too smoothly. Who's driving? Others preferred the 2004 Lanson.

2008 Pierre Sparr Gewurztraminer, with its intense exotic aromas of lychees, rose petal, tropical fruits and spice, mouth filling palate flavours, it sounds like I am describing a fruit salad with a touch of spice; something like a Turkish Delight. It seemed to be the perfect partner to our next course; Fresh White Alba Truffles shaved over Soft Polenta and a poached hen's egg.

The ceremonial shaving of the truffles at the table was done expertly by our waiter Tony.

The Polenta was soft and creamy, the Hens egg runny, the truffle perfect for this dish, subtle without being too strong.

As someone said, it could easily replace “Special K’s for breakfast. It also brought back happy memories for Lorenzo when he was growing up in Italy; he would go truffle hunting with his dad, then enjoy the bounty shaved over his Nonna’s Polenta .

Another taste sensation we were looking forward to was the Foie Gras. We were not disappointed; after being shown the full Foie Gras by Tony it was taken away to be sliced, then brought back served on top of a melt in your mouth piece of Pink Roasted Eye Fillet, perfect. The Madeira Glaze and Black Truffle Jus and the Nutmeg topped Potato were nothing short of magnificent. I have to mention the Refreshing Salad served after this dish; it was very refreshing. Green leaves with Orange segments and a light dressing.

The 1995 La Lagune 3rd Grand Cru Classe seemed to be the winner for the above, personally I found it a little too astringent for the Foie Gras.

Caramelised pear with Shadows of Blue Cheese and Toasted Ginger Bread, was beautifully presented on the plate, it looked too good to eat according to a couple of guests.

Accompanied by the 2007 Chateau Lafaurie Peyraguey; a very nice style of Sauterne, it was an excellent choice for the dessert.

Last but not least were the Petit Fours; for some it was more like 5’s or 6’s, served with Coffee and a very nice 2011 Fonseca Vintage Port.

We enjoyed great French Champagne, Wines, Caviar, Truffles and Foie Gras.

Truly French, truly magnifique

Thank you, Michael, John and Klaus for a wonderful night.

Judy